

GOOD MORNING LADIES AND GENTLEMAN OF THE COMMITTEE. I AM HERE IN SUPPORT OF BILLED # 5231 AN ACT CONCERNING AUTO GLASS WORK. MY NAME IS MARK VECE I AM WITH CURVED GLASS DISTRIUTORS. WE ARE WHOLESALER OF AUTO GLASS AND ARCHITECTURAL GLASS. WE HAVE 2 LOCATIONS IN CT. ONE IN DERBY AND THE OTHER IN ENFIELD. WE HAVE BEEN IN BUSINESS SINCE 1945. OUR CUSTOMER BASE IS THE INDEPENDENT GLASS SHOPS.

THRU THE YEARS WE HAVE SEEN MANY CHANGES IN OUR CUSTOMER BASE. BEFORE THE ADVENT OF THE NETWORKS AND THE THIRD PARTY ADMINISTATORS THERE WERE A LOT OF GLASS SHOPS ALL OVER CT. THAT OFFERED AUTO GLASS INSTALLATION. THIS CREATED A COMPETITIVE ATMOSPHERE FOR THE CONSUMER TO HAVE MORE THAN ONE OPTION WHEN CHOOSING A BUSINESS TO INSTALL A GLASS IN THEIR CAR OR TRUCK. IT ALSO CREATES A COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR PRICING SO THAT THE GLASS IS INSTALLED FOR LESS MONEY.

MOST AUTO GLASS INSTALLATION SHOPS HAVE THREE TYPES OF CUSTOMERS. FIRST, IS THE WHOLESALE ACCOUNT SUCH AS BODY SHOPS, CAR DEALERS AND BUSINESSES THAT REQUIRE AUTO GLASS SUCH AS UPS OR U HAUL. THE SECOND ARE CONSUMERS OR BUSINESSES THAT PAY FOR THE GLASS THEMSELVES. THIRD, ARE

INSURED CONSUMERS WHO NEED A GLASS REPLACED AND HAVE GLASS COVERAGE TO PAY FOR IT.

THOUGH THE YEARS THIS THIRD PART HAS ALL BUT DISAPPEARED FOR THE INDEPENDENT SHOPS. ALL OF THAT BUSINESS NOW GOES TO THE CHAINS WHO MAKE NATIONAL DEALS WITH THE INSURANCE COMPANIES.

THIS HAS MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR THE INDEPENDENT GLASS SHOPS TO SURVIVE. WE HAVE SEEN MANY SHOPS EITHER CLOSE OR GET OUT OF THE AUTO GLASS BUSINESS, GIVING CONSUMERS LESS OPTIONS.

WE HAVE SEEN A LOSS OF JOBS IN THE STATE AND MOST OF THE REVENUE GOING TO OTHER STATES OR FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

WE HOPE THAT YOU WILL SUPPORT THE LANGUAGE TO EXISTING LAW SECTION 38A-354. SO THAT INDEPENDENT GLASS SHOPS WILL BE ON A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD WITH THE NATIONAL CHAINS